



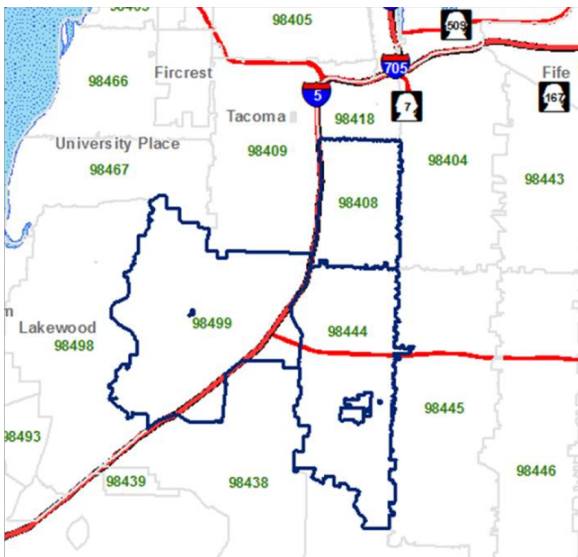
A 5-year pilot to develop a comprehensive system of support for families of children from prenatal through age 5

Goals

1. Reduce dependency filings for children birth to three in target zip codes
2. Gain population information on services needed and offered
3. Improve child health outcomes

Target Areas

This county-wide system of support will have targeted outreach efforts that cover three jurisdictions: City of Lakewood, City of Tacoma, and unincorporated Pierce County. The target zip codes selected are worrisome on many measures of community safety, health, and financial stability.



Target Zip Codes:
 98408 South Tacoma, Fern Hill
 98499 Lakewood, Springbrook
 98444 Parkland

	Poverty Rate	Low Birth Weight	% Ready for Kindergarten
WA State	12.7%	6.4%	47.7%
98408	16.3%	6.1%	33.8%
98444	22.0%	7.1%	36.8%
98499	24.5%	7.2%	32.6%

Prevention is a Smart Investment

Each year, over 1,000 children in Pierce County enter the foster care system – **with 25% of them in just the first year of life.** In October 2017, the average cost for children under age 5 in out-of-home care was \$927 per month, for a total monthly county cost of \$412,733. This cost does not include parent services, visitation, court fees, attorney costs, social worker salaries, or the emotional toil of trauma experienced by parents and children who are separated.

“Washington State needs new strategies to work upstream to solve heartbreaking problems. Pierce County has seen a significant increase in children being removed from their homes because of abuse and neglect. Intervention that happens late through the court system traumatizes fragile children even further. The Help Me Grow Pierce County Pilot can help us develop better tools to strengthen families, support parents and keep children safe.”

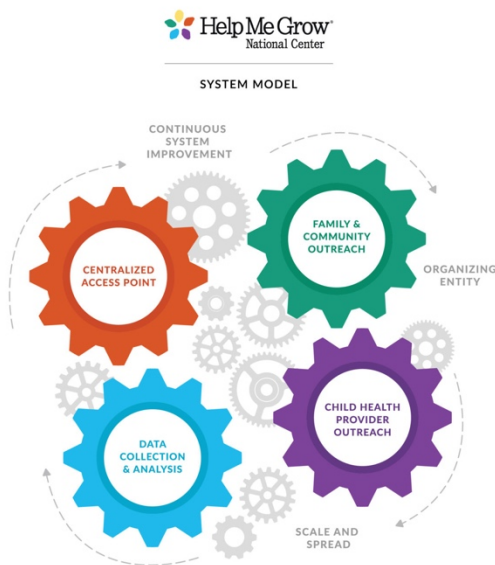
Honorable Kitty-Ann van Doorninck
 Pierce County Superior Court

Who We Are

Help Me Grow Pierce County is a collaboration of over 100 community organizations, government agencies, parents, and funders. Key partners include the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Juvenile Courts, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, United Way 2-1-1, and WithinReach, the statewide affiliate for Help Me Grow.

How It Will Work

Drawing upon the proven national frameworks of Help Me Grow and Family Connects, Pierce County is developing a comprehensive system of support for parents to improve early childhood outcomes. Help Me Grow is a model implemented in over 25 states that improves coordination among existing services to identify vulnerable children, links families to services, and supports children's healthy development. The system brings together a centralized access point for resource linkage, family and community outreach efforts, child health provider outreach, and data collection and analysis to identify existing resource gaps.



Family Connects is an evidence-based universal approach to supporting parents at the time of birth through brief nurse home visiting. Universal efforts complement, and do not replace, more intensive targeted home visiting programs by introducing all families to the local system of care and ensuring they have what they need. Through 1-3 home visits in the first 12 weeks of life, families of newborns are assessed in the four domains of Health Care, Home Safety, Infant Care, and Parent Support. With parent collaboration, results are used to facilitate linkages to community resources including providing a warm hand-off to Help Me Grow's support as the child grows. Family Connects has been shown to reduce the rate of future child welfare investigations by 39% for families who had received support in a Randomized Control Trial.

Child maltreatment is an urgent public health problem. Working preventatively to strengthen protective factors and reduce risks, Help Me Grow Pierce County with Family Connects will strengthen the infant-parent bond and the parent support systems that can improve health, keep families together, children safe, and communities strong.

Request:

Help Me Grow and Family Connects combined have shown promising results for providing a comprehensive system of early childhood support that reduces child maltreatment, improves service coordination, and reaches families. We request additional funding to begin implementation in 2019.

What Year 1 of the Community Planning Process Has Accomplished to date:

- Four action teams meeting monthly to design the four components of a Help Me Grow system
- Comprehensive data report on the status of children from prenatal through age 5 in Pierce County
- Engagement of over 115 community stakeholders and parents in planning
- Cost estimates and implementation plans to prepare for launch in July 2019

Cost Estimates for Project Implementation:

- Year 2: Help Me Grow (\$1 million) and Family Connects (\$1.2 million) to start with 1 hospital
- Scale to reach universal access by Year 5: Help Me Grow sustained at \$1.1 million per year and Family Connects sustained at \$4.8 million per year (to reach 75% of families in Pierce County)